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CONVERSATIONAL HINTS FOR YOUNG SHOOTERS.

THE SMOKING-ROOM (continued).

I MAY assume, that after the terrible example given in my last chapter, you have firmly made up your mind never on any account to take service in the great army of bores. But this determination is not all that is necessary. A man must constantly keep a strict guard on himself, lest he should unconsciously deviate even for a few minutes into the regions of boredom. Whatever you do, let nothing tempt you to relate more than once any grievance you may have. Nothing of course is more poisonous to the aggrieved one than to stifle his grievance absolutely. Once, and once only, he may produce it to his friends. I shall be blamed, perhaps, for making even this slight concession. Please be careful, therefore, not to abuse it. Is there in the whole world a more ridiculous sight than a strong, healthy, well-fed sportsman who wears his companions one after another with the depressing recital of his ill-luck, or of the dastardly behaviour of the head-keeper in not stopping the whole party for half an hour to search for an imaginary bird, which is supposed to have fallen stone-dead somewhere or other; or of the iniquities of the man from whom he bought his cartridges in not loading them with the right charge; or any of the hundred inconveniences and injuries to which sportsmen are liable. All these things may be as he says they are. He may be the most unfortunate, the most unjustly treated of mankind. But why insist upon it? Why check the current of sympathy by the dam of constant repetition? And, after all, how trivial and absurd the whole thing is! Even a man whose career has been ruined by malicious persecution will be avoided like a pest if it is known that he dines the account of his wrongs into everyone's ears. How, then, shall the sufferer by the petty injuries of ordinary sport be listened to with patience? Of all bores, the grievancemonger is the fiercest and worst. Lay this great truth by in your memory, and be mindful of it in more important matters than sport when the occasion arises.

I have been asked to say, whether a man may abuse his gun? I reply emphatically, no. A gun is not a mere ordinary machine. Its beautiful arrangement of locks, and springs, and catches, and bolts, and pins, and screws, its unaccountable perversities, its occasional fits of sulkiness, its lovely brown complexion, and its capacity both for kicking and for smoking, all prove that a gun is in reality a sentient being of a very high order of intelligence. You may be quite certain that if you abuse your gun, even when you may imagine it to be far out of earshot, comfortably cleaned and put to rest on its rack, your gun will resent it. Why are most sportsmen so silent, so distrustful at breakfast? Why do they dally with a scrap of fish, and linger over the consumption of a small kidney, and drink great draughts of tea to restore their equilibrium? If you ask them, they will tell you that it's because they're "just a bit chippy," owing to sitting up late, or smoking too much, or forgetting to drink a whiskey and soda before they went to bed. I know better. It is because they incautiously spoke evil of their guns, and their guns retaliated by haunting their sleep. I know guns have this power of projecting horrible emanations of themselves into the slumbers of sportsmen who have not treated them as they deserved. I have suffered from it myself. It was only last week that, having said something derogatory to the dignity of my second gun, I woke with a start at two o'clock in the morning, and found its wraith going through the most horrible antics in a patch of moonlight on my bed-room floor. I shot with that gun on the following day, and missed nearly everything I shot at. Could there be a more convincing proof? Take my advice, therefore, and abstain from abusing your gun.

Now your typical smoking-room conversation ought always to include the following subjects:—(1) The wrong-headed, unpopular man, whom every district possesses, and who is always at loggerheads with somebody; (2) "The best shot in England," who is to be found in every country-side, and in whose achievements all the sportsmen of his particular district take a patriotic pride; (3) the folly and wickedness of those who talk or write ignorantly against any kind of sport; (4) the deficiency of hares due to the rascally provisions of the Hares and Rabbits Act; (5) a few reminiscences, slightly glorified, of the particular day's sport; and (6) a prolonged argument on the relative merits of the old plan of shooting birds over dogs, and the modern methods of walking them up or driving.

These are not the only, but certainly the chief ingredients. Let me give you an example, drawn from my note-book.

SCENE—The Smoking-room of a Country-house in December. Six Sportsmen in Smoking-coats. Time, 11:15 P.M.

First Sportsman (concluding a harangue). All I can say is, I never read such rot in all my life. Why, the fellow doesn't know a gun from a cartridge-bag. I'm perfectly sick of reading that everlasting rubbish about "pampered minions of the aristocracy slaughtering the unresisting pheasant in his thousands at battue." I wonder what the beggars imagine a rocketing pheasant is like? I should like to have seen one of 'em outside Chivy Wood to-day. I never saw taller birds in my life. Talk of them being easy! Why, a pheasant gets over so much more show for his money when he's beaten over the guns. If they simply walk him up, he hasn't got a thousand to one chance. Bah! [Drinks from a long glass.]

Second Sportsman. I saw in some paper the other day what the President of the United States thought about English battue-shooting. Seemed to think we shot pheasants perched in the trees, and went on to say that wasn't the sport for him; he liked to go after his game, and find it for himself. Who the deuce cares if he does? If he can't talk better sense than that, no wonder CLEVELAND beat him in the election.

Third Sp. Pure rubbish, of course. Still I must say, apart from pheasants, I like the old plan of letting your dogs work. It's far more sport than walking up partridges in line, or getting them driven at you.

First Sp. My dear fellow, I don't agree with you a bit. In the first place, as to driving—driven birds are fifty times more difficult; and what's the use of wasting time with setters or pointers in ordinary root-fields. It's all sentiment.

[A long and animated discussion ensues. This particular subject never fails to provoke a tremendous argument.]

[A few minutes later.]

Second Sp. (to the host). What was the bag to-day, CHALMERS?

Chalmers. A hundred and forty-five pheasants, fifty-six rabbits, eleven hares, three pigeons, and a woodcock. We should have got a hundred and eighty pheasants if they hadn't dodged us in the big wood. I can't make out where they went.

Second Sp. It's a deuced difficult wood to beat, that is. I thought we should have got more hares, all the same.

Chalmers. Hares! I think I'm precious lucky to get so many nowadays. There won't be a hare left in a year or two.

[The discussion proceeds.]

Third Sp. How's old JOHNNY RAIKES shooting this year? I never saw such a chap for rocketers. They can't escape him.

Chalmers. I asked him to-day, but he couldn't come. I think for pheasants he's quite the best shot in England. Nobody can beat him at that game.

Fourth Sp. Hasn't he got some row or other on with CRACKSIDE?

Chalmers. Yes. That makes fourteen rows CRACKSIDE has got going on all at once. He seems to revel in them. His latest move was to refuse to pay tithe, and when the parson levied a distress, he made all his tenants drunk and walked at their head blowing a post-horn. He's as mad as a hatter.

So there you have a sample conversation, sketched in outline. You will find it accurate enough. All you have to do is to select for yourself the part you mean to play in it.

Something to Live For.

(From the Literary Club Smoking-room.)

Cynicus. I'm waiting till my friends are dead, in order to write My Reminiscences?

Amicus. Ah, but remember. "De mortuis nil nisi bonum."

Cynicus. Quite so. I shall tell nothing but exceedingly good stories about them.

So LIKE HER!—"I can never trust him," said Mrs. R., alluding to a friend of hers, who considered himself well up in SHAKESPEARE, "because I've found out before now that he gargles his quotations."

NOTE—"The Man who Would," will appear next week. No. IV.





THE RHODES COLOSSUS
STRIDING FROM CAPE TOWN TO CAIRO.

THE RHODES COLOSSUS.

["Mr. RHODES announced that it was his intention, either with the help of his friends or by himself, to continue the telegraph northwards, across the Zambesi, through Nyasaland, and along Lake Tanganyika to Uganda. Nor is this all. . . . This colossal *Monte Cristo* means to cross the Soudan . . . and to complete the overland telegraph line from Cape Town to Cairo; that is, from England to the whole of her possessions or colonies, or 'spheres of influence' in Africa."—*The Times*.]

The World's Seven Wonders are surely outshone!

On Marvel World's billows 'twill toss us—'twill toss us,

To watch him, Director and Statesman in one,

This Seven-League-Booted Colossus—Colossus!

Combining in one super-natural blend
Plain Commerce and
Imagination—gination;
O'er Africa striding from
dark end to end,
To forward black emancipation—ipation.

Broddingnagian Bagman,
big Dreamer of Dreams,
A Titan of tact and
shrewd trader—shrewd
trader!
A diplomat full of *finesse*
and sharp schemes,
With a touch of the pious
Crusader—Crusader!
A "Dealer" with despots,
a "Squarer" of Kings,
A jumper of mountain,
lake, wilderness, wady,
And manager 'oute of
such troublesome things
As LOBENGULA or the
MAHDI—the MAHDI.

Well may ABERCORN wonder and FIFE tootle
praise,
His two thousand hearers
raise cheering—raise
cheering.
Of wild would-be Scuttlers
he proves the mad craze,
And of Governments
prone to small-beering
—small-beering.
Sullen Boers may prove
bores to a man of less
tact,
A duffer funk wiles Por-
tuguesy—tuguesy;
But Dutchmen, black po-
tentates, all sorts, in
fact,
To RHODES the astute
come quite easy—quite
easy.

The British South-African Company's shares

May be at a discount—(Trade-martys!—trade-martys!)

But he, our Colossus, strides on, he declares,

Whether with or without ehums or charters—or charters.

Hooray! We brave Britons are still to the front—

Provided we've someone to boss us—to boss us;

And Scuttlers will have their work out out to shunt

This stalwart, far-striding Colossus—Colossus!

TAXES. A HOARDING AND SAVING CLAUSE.—*A propos* of an article in the *Times* on this subject, and a paragraph of *Mr. Punch's*, last week, anent "Hoardings," we may now put a supplementary question in this form, "As Government taxes *Savings*, would it not be quite consistent to tax *Hoardings*?" Since the answer must, logically, be in the affirmative, let Government begin at once with all the Hoardings displaying any kind of hideous pictorial advertisement.

"He rumbles so in his conversation," observed Mrs. R. of an orator whose sentences were considerably involved, "that I can seldom catch the gist of what he says."

PRACTICAL THEOSOPHY.

Mrs. BESANT is said to have told a representative of a daily paper, that "an adept in Theosophy uses his supernatural powers solely for his own convenience, just as ordinary people avail themselves of a messenger, or the telephone or telegraph."

We have it on the very best of authority that the discharge of handbills from aerial bombs is to be entirely surpassed as a method for advertising a commodity, by a new and protected process.

"A Company is being formed," so runs the prospectus, "for the express purpose of importing Mahatmas of the very best vintage (guaranteed *extra sec*), direct from Thibet, where an exceptionally luxuriant crop has been produced during past years.

"They will be shipped to any port in the United Kingdom, and delivered to any address, carriage free, at prices which will compare most favourably with those quoted by foreign firms for inferior articles.

"The trade supplied by special contract.

"They will prove invaluable to advertisers and others.

"No family should be without one. Order early.

"They can be used for a variety of purposes; but they will be found most particularly serviceable for distributing handbills and posters, especially in inaccessible places.

"Domestic servants entirely superseded by them.

"Prompt and accurate delivery of any object may be effected by their agency, owing to their marvellous powers of precipitation.

"Full instructions for working, and instruments for repairing, supplied with each specimen.

"Not liable to get out of order.

"Safe in the hands of a child. Yet they are not toys.

"Procurable of any respectable Lunatic Asylum.

"Ask for Our Brand, and see that you get none other.

"Beware of worthless foreign imitations, which dishonest dealers will try to foist upon you.

"Of Mahatmas young, and Mahatmas old,
Of Mahatmas meek, and Mahatmas bold,

Of Mahatmas gentle, and Mahatmas rough,
We lay long odds that we'll sell enough."

The financial column of the Journal of the Future, we may expect, will read somewhat as follows:—"Mahatmas opened weak, but slowly advanced a third. Later they became stronger, and closed firm at 8½. Latest—Mahatmas fell rapidly."

Tempora mutantur, nos et mutamur in illis.

CHARITY BEGINS ABROAD.—The following advertisement (which recently appeared in the *Times*) has been sent for solution:—

GENTLEMAN, with knowledge of business and disposing of 100,000 francs, is desirous of REPRESENTING, either in Europe, Africa, America, or elsewhere, a serious FIRM, capable of giving important profits. Offers to be addressed, &c.

In reply to this appeal, *Mr. Punch* begs to say that "the gentleman with knowledge of business" seems to be anxious to act as an *alter ego* to a serious (not a joocular) firm "capable of giving profits." "GENTLEMAN" does not specify whose profits the serious firm is capable of giving, and thus it may be presumed that the 100,000 francs would form the capital with which the charitable transaction would be conducted. This is the more probable as "GENTLEMAN" says he knows how to dispose of them.



A HEARTY WELCOME.

Local Flyman (who also officiates at Funerals). "MORNIN', SIR. GLAD TO SEE YOU OUT AGAIN! REALLY THOUGHT I SHOULD 'A' HAD THE HONOUR OF DRIVIN' YOU TO THE CEMETERY, SIR!"

ALL ROUND THE FAIR!

No. IV.

THE IRISH GIANT BABY "AT HOME."

The exterior of the Show is painted to represent a Cottage, and bears the highly improbable name of "POLLY O'GRACIOUS," with an even less credible announcement that this is the identical "little cot where she was born." Inside is an ordinary tent, with a rough platform at the further end, whereon is an empty chair, at which a group of small Boys, two or three young Women, and some middle-aged Farm-labourers, have been, solemnly and patiently staring for the last quarter of an hour.

First Farm Labourer (to Second). I bin in 'ere 'bout erf an hour, I hev, and ain't seed nowt so far!

Second F. L. Same 'ere! Seems to take 'em a proper good time a-gittin' o' this 'ere baby olaned up!

First F. L. Ah, it do. But look at the size on her!

Second F. L. Size! They cudn't be no slower not with a hellyphant!

[The tedium is relieved by a very audible dispute outside between the Driver of the Baby's Caravan and the Wife of the Conjuror next door, who appears to have excited the Driver's displeasure by consenting to take the money in the absence of the Baby's proprietress.

The Driver (with dignity). I consider it a bloomin' liberty, and a downright piece of himpertinence, you comin' 'ere interferin' with my business—and so I tell yer!

The Lady (with more dignity). I'm not taking no liberties with nobody—she ast me to it, or I shoudn't be 'ere—I don't want to take the money, not without bein' ast to do so. She come and ast me to take her place while she was away, and in course I wasn't goin' to say no.

Driver. Don't you tork to me. I know what you are, puttin' yerself forward whenever yer can—a goin' tellin' the people on the road as you was the Baby's mother!

The Lady. I never said no such thing! Why should I want to tell sech a story for?

Driver. Arak yourself—not me. And p'rape you never said you 'ad valuable property in our waggin' neither.

Lady (apparently cut to the heart by this accusation). It's a false'ood! I never 'ad no valuable property in your waggin', nor yet nobody else's; and I'll thank you to keep your distance, and not go raggin' me.

Driver (edging nearer). I'll keep my distance. But don't you make no mistake—I'm not to be played with! I'm sick o' your goin's on. And then (receiving a ranking and mysterious grievance) to think o' you a comin' mincin' up on the road with yer (mimicking). "Oh, yus, Mrs. FAIRCHILD, there's a blacksmith jest across the way!" What call 'ad you got to shove your nose in like that, eh? you're a interferin' cat, that's what you are!

[The Conjuror's Lady is moved to the verge of tears and assault, and her wrath is only assuaged by the arrival of the missing Proprietress, who patches up a temporary peace: presently the hangings at the back are parted, and an immensely stout child, dressed in an infant's frock, waddles in, hoists herself on the platform and into the chair, from which she regards the Spectators with stolid composure; the small boys edge back, nudge one another and smigger furtively; the girls say "Oh, lor!" in a whisper, and a painful silence follows.

A Middle-aged Labourer (feeling the awkwardness of the situation). 'Ow old may you be, Missy?

The Giant Baby (with a snap). Ten!

[She gazes all round with the hauteur peculiar to a phenomenon, and her visitors are only relieved from the strain by the timely appearance of the Exhibitor, a Mulatto lady, who gives a brief biographical sketch of the Infant's career, with details of her weight and measurements. Then Miss POLLY sings a stanza of "Little Annie Rooney" in a phonographic manner, dances a few ponderous steps, and identifies the most sheepish youth in the audience—much to his embarrassment—as her sweetheart, after which her audience is permitted to shake hands with her and depart.

A PRIZE LOTTERY.

A Young Man in a light suit, and a paste pin in a dirty white necktie, has arrived with a chest, from which he extracts a quantity of small parcels in coloured tissue-paper.

The Young Man (as a group collects around him). Now, I'm 'ere to offer those among yer who 'ave the courage to embark in speculation an unrivalled opportunity of enriching themselves at next to no expense. Concealed in each o' these small parcels is a prize o' more or less value, amongst them bein', I may tell yer, two 'undred threepenny pieces, not to mention 'igher coins up to 'arf a sov'rin. Mind, I promise nothing—I only say this: that those who show confidence in me I'll reward beyond their utmost expectations. (To an Agricultural Labourer in the circle.) 'Ere, you Sir, 'ave you ever seen me before in all your life?

The Agricultural Labourer (with a conscientious fear of committing himself). I may 'ave.

The Young Man. You may 'ave! 'Ave you? 'Ave I ever seen you? Come now!

The Agr. L. (cautiously). I earn't answer fur what you've seen, Sir.

The Y. M. Well, are you a friend o' mine? The A. L. (after inward searchings). Not as I'm awere on.

The Y. M. Then take this packet. (The A. L. grins and hesitates.) Give me a penny for it. (The A. L. hangs back.) Do as I say! (His tone is so peremptory that the A. L. hastens to obey.) Now don't open that till I tell you, and don't go away—or I shall throw the money after yer. (The A. L. remains in meek expectation; OLD BILLY FAIRPLAY, and a Spotty-faced Man, happen to pass; and join the group out of innocent curiosity.) Will you give me a penny for this, Sir? (To the Spotty-faced One, who shakes his head.) To oblige Me! (This is said in such an insinuating tone, that it is impossible to resist him.) Now you've shown your confidence in me, will you open that packet and show the company what it contains.

The Spotty-faced Man (undoing the packet). There's nothink inside o' mine—it's a reg'lar do! [Roars of laughter.

The Y. M. Quite right—there was nothink inside o' thet partickler packet. I put it there a-purpose, as a test. But I don't want nobody to go away dissatisfied with my manner o' doin' business, and though I ain't promised yer nothink, I'll show yer I'm better than my word, and them as trusts me'll find no reason to repent o' 'aving done so. 'Ere's your original penny back, Sir, and one, two, three more atop of that—wait, I ain't done with yer yet—'ere's a sixpence more, because I've took a fancy to yer face—and now I 'ope you're satisfied!

The Sp.-F. M. (in an explanatory undertone to his neighbours). I knew it's on'y them as comes last that gits left, d'yer see!

[Several bystanders hasten to purchase.

Old Billy Fairplay (in an injured tone). There ain't on'y a three-penny-bit in mine!

The Y. M. 'Ark at 'im—there's a discontented ole josses for yer! I can't put 'arf a sov'rin in all o' the packets, not and make my expenses. P'rape you'll 'ave better luck next time.

[The packets are in more demand than ever.

The Agr. L. May I open this 'ere packet now, Master?

The Y. M. If you don't tell nobody what's in it, you may. I've sold as many as I keer to a' ready.

The Agr. L. (opening the parcel, and finding a toy-watch of the value of one farthing sterling). 'Ere, I'll give yer this back—'tain't no good to me!

The Y. M. (with concern). I'm reelly very sorry, Sir, I've given you a wrong 'un by mistake. I quite fancied as—Allow me to apologise, and, as a proof I 'aven't lost your good opinion, give me a penny for this one.

[He selects a packet with great care from the heap. The A. L. You don't take me in no moor—I'd sooner make ye a present o' the penny!

The Y. M. (wounded). Don't talk like that, Sir—you'll be sorry for it afterwards! (In a whisper.) It's all right this time, s'elp me!

The A. L. I know as it's a kitch o' some sort...—how's'ever,



"Concealed in each o' these small parcels is a prize o' more or less value."

jest this once. (He purchases another packet, and is rewarded by an eyeglass, constructed of cardboard and coloured gelatine, which he flings into the circle in a fury.) 'Tis nobbut a darned swindle—and I've done wi' ye! Ye're all a pack o' rogues together!

(Exit, amidst laughter from the rest, whose confidence, however, has been rewarded by very similar results.)

The Y. M. He don't know what he's lost by givin' way to his narsty temper—but there, I forgive 'im! (He begins to replace the remaining parcels in the chest; one packet escapes his notice, and is instantly pounced upon by a sharp, but penniless urchin.) Now, Gentlemen, I'm 'ere reppersentin' two Charitable Institootions—the Blind Asylum, and the Idjut Orfins—but I'm bloomin' sorry to say that, this time, arter I've deducted my little trifling commission, there'll be a bloomin' little to 'and over to either o' them deservin' Societies; so, thenkin' you all, and wishin' you bloomin' good luck, and 'appiness and prosperity through life, I'll say good-bye to yer.

The Sharp Urchin (after retiring to a safe distance with his booty.) Their's summat inside of 'un—I can 'ear un a-rartlin'... 'ow many moor wrops! 'Tis money, fur sartin!... (Removes the last wrapping. Nowthen but a silly owld cough-drop! (He calls after the Young Man, who is retreating with Mr. FAIRFLAX, and his spotty friend.) I've a blamed good mind to 'ave th' Lar on ye fur that, I hev—a chatin' fawks I sech a way! Why don't ye act honest?

(Is left masticating the cough-lozenges in speechless indignation.)

"THE SINS OF SOCIETY."

READ yesterday, in the *Fortnightly*, this article by OUIDA. Resolved to follow her teachings at once. Changed my "frightful, grotesque, and disgraceful male costume" for the most picturesque garments I had—a kilt, a blue blazer, and a yellow turban, which I once wore at a fancy dress ball. Then strolled along Piccadilly to the Club. Rather cool. Having abandoned "the most vulgar form of salutation, the shake-hands" bowed distantly to several men I had known for years—but they looked another way. Met a policeman. "Hullo!" he said. "Come out o' that! Your place is in the road." He mistook me for a sandwich-man! Explained that I was advocating a new style of dress. "Where's yer trousers?" he asked. "Trousers!" I cried. "Why, OUIDA"—but it was useless to explain to such a fool—so I left him.

At the Club, immense astonishment. Again explained. Members tapped their foreheads, and said I had better see the Doctor. Why? Then they all avoided me. Grand chance to show my ability "to support solitude, and to endure silence." Deuced dull, but it saved me from "the poisoned atmosphere of crowded rooms." Began to feel hungry about lunch-time, but happily remembered that "it is not luxury which is enervating, it is over-eating." Exhausted, but virtuous. Remembered that I had to dine at my aunt's. Awkward! Could I go in that dress? She is so prim, and so prejudiced in favour of trousers. Also she is so rich, and I was her heir. It needs money to obtain the luxury which the great teacher advocates. Hurried home, and put on hateful evening dress. Avoided handsome, they being too much connected with one "ugly hurry-scurry" and drove to my aunt's in a damp, dirty four-wheeler. Even the new moralist herself would have been satisfied with the slowness of that.

At dinner sat between two charming women, evidently as clever as they were beautiful. Suddenly remembered that we "lose the subtle and fine flavours of our best dishes, because we consider ourselves obliged to converse with somebody," and after that did not speak a word. Charming women stared, and then each turned towards me a beautiful shoulder, and I saw her face no more. Was just enjoying the flavours when I recollected that nothing "can make even tolerable, artistically speaking, the sight of men and women sitting bolt upright close together taking their soup." We were long past the soup, but it was not too late. I left the table at once, and reclined elegantly on the floor, with my plate by my side. "AUGUSTUS," said my Aunt, "are you ill?" I shook my head; I could not speak, for I was just enjoying an unusually subtle flavour. Then one of the guests, a member of my Club, whispered to my aunt, and tapped her forehead. Then she tapped her forehead, and all the guests tapped their foreheads. I had finished that flavour, so I said, "My dear Aunt, I am not mad, I—" "Then," said she, "you must be intoxicated. Leave the house!" And, with the butler and the footmen escorting me to the street-door, I was obliged to do so.

It is all over. I know that my Aunt will bequeath her fortune to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Ancient Buildings among the Jews, but I am consoled by the thought that I, at least, have followed the noble teachings of the New Morality.

"WHEN FOUND MAKE A NOTE OF."—By Captain SCUTTLE, to British East African Co.:—"Your Room is better than your Company."

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

THE title of Mr. CONAN DOYLE's new book, *Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, is incomplete without the addition of, "And the D.D., or Dummy Doctor," who plays a part in the narratives analogous to that of "Charles, his Friend," on the stage. The book is, in many respects, a thriller, reminding one somewhat of *The Diary of a Late Physician*, by SAMUEL WARREN. This volume is handsomely got up—too handsomely—and profusely, too profusely, illustrated. For both romancer and reader, such stories are better un-illustrated. A sensational picture attracts, and distracts. In this collection the Baron can recommend *The Beryl Coronet*, *The Red-Headed League*, *The Copper Beeches*, and *The Speckled Band*. The best time for reading any one of these stories is the last thing at night, before turning in. "At such an hour, try *The Speckled Band*, and see how you like it," says the Bold Baron.

The Baron's assistant dives into the Christmas Card Basket, and produces RAPHAEL TUCK AND SONS—"Tuck," a schoolword dear to "our boys,"—who lead off the Christmas dance. Daintily and picturesquely got up, their Cards are quite full. Their Watteau Screens will serve as small ornaments afterwards. These "Correct Cards," with few exceptions, are not particularly for Christmas, but for all time. Here's a Luck to RAPHAEL TUCK!

"Todgers's could do it when it liked," and so can Messrs. HUTCHINSON & Co. at this Fairy Tale time, when they bring out three capital books, edited by ALFRED H. MILNE; i.e., *Fifty-two Fairy Tales*, *Fifty-two other Stories for Boys*, and *Fifty-two other Stories for Girls*. Why not Fairy Tales for a holiday task, and an examination in Fairy Lore, with a Fairy Lore Degree for the successful candidate?

Then come BLACKIE AND SONS with Plenty from HENRY—Mr. G. A. HENRY—who at Christmas-time is anything but a "Non-Henty-ty." *Beric the Briton, In Greek Waters, Condemned as a Nihilist!*—"Go it, HENRY!" The Baron cheers you onward.

The Thirsty Sword, by ROBERT LEIGHTON. It's a killing story.

An Old-Time Yarn, by EDGAR PICKERING, about the adventures of DRAKE and HAWKINS. HAWKINS, mariner, not Sir EWY, the Judge. New yarn. Strong old salts—very refreshing.

The Bull Calf, brought out for JOHN BULL JUNIOR's amusement at Christmas, and seasonably illustrated by FROST, is a queer sort of animal of the Two Macs Donkey breed. Right for NIMMO to have some fun at Christmas, according to old example, "*Nimmo mortalium omnibus horis sapit*."

What's in a name? not the first time this question has been asked and answered—but 'tis impossible for the Baron to avoid quoting it now, when in consequence of its title, he was within an ace of putting aside *The Germ Growers*, under the impression that it was a scientific work on Bacillus and Phylloxera. On taking it up, however, the Baron soon became deeply interested, but was subsequently annoyed to find how the artful author had beguiled him by leading up to a kind of imitation of the *In hoc Signo vinces* legend, and had somewhat adroitly adapted to his purpose the imagery of one of the most poetic and sublime of ancient Scripture narratives; i.e., where the prophet sees the chariots of Israel in the air. One remarkable thing about the romance is the absence of "love-motive," and, indeed, the absence of all female interest. Here and there the Canon writes carelessly, as instance the following paragraph:—

"Then he got a little glass-tube into which he put something out of a very small bottle, which he took from a number of others which lay side by side in a little case which he took out of a pocket in the side of the car."

Apart from other faults, there are too many "whiches" here, and unlike his malignant hero, *Davoli*, the Canon doesn't seem to be well up in his "which-craft." Clever Canon POTTER must turn out from his Potteries some ware superior to this for the public and

THE BARON.

REFLECTION IN THE MIST.—You could have "cut the fog, it was so thick," is a common expression. But the fog, unwelcome as it always is, is not like an unwelcome acquaintance, who can be "cut" or avoided by turning down a street, or by pretending unconsciousness of his proximity.

QUESTION FOR A LEGAL EXAM.—If a farmer purchased a good milch cow reared at Dorking, what would be its (old style) legal produce? Answer or Refinder.—Why, of course, some sort of Surrey-butter.



A NORSE TALE



CULTCHAH!

Suburban Belle (to her Dressmaker). "AND I SHOULD LIKE A MEDICI COLLAR TO MY TEA-GOWN. DO YOU UNDERSTAND? A MEDICI COLLAR—LIKE THAT OF THE VENUS DE MEDICI!"

"DAVY JONES'S LOCKER."

DAVY JONES, *loquatur* :—

"Fifteen men on the dead man's chest. Hey! ho, and a bottle of rum!"

Faith, that's a chorus I can rattle off with zest. Gratefully it clatters upon DAVY's tym-pa-num.

Like a devil's tattoo from Death's drum! Fil Foh Fum! These be very parious times for old legends of the sea.

VANDERDECKEN is taboo'd, the Sea Sarpint is pooh-pooh'd, but 'tis plain as any pikestaff they can't disestablish Me!

DADDY NEPTUNE may delight in the Island trim and tight, where his sea-dogs breed and fight, as in days of yore,

When old CHARLIE DIDDIE's fancy piped free songs of JACK and NANCY, of Jolly Salts at sea, and Old Tarry-Breeks ashore;

But if Britons rule the waves, as the grog-fired sailor raves, when he dreams of glorious graves in the deep dark main,

DADDY NEPTUNE must allow DAVY shares his empire now, or the Sultan and the House have gone down in vain.

DADDY NEPTUNE loves me not. Plumped by storm or by shot, my Locker held a lot in the days gone by,

But 'tis daily growing fuller. Is the British Tar off colour, are the sea-dogs slower, duller, though as game to die?

Has Science spoilt their skill, that their iron pots so fill my old Locker? How I thrill at the lumbering crash,

When a-crunch upon a rock, with a thundering Titan shock, goes some shapeless metal block, to immortal smash?

Oh! it's real, rasping fun! Mighty hull, monster gun, all are mine ere all's done; and the millions madly spent

On a lollopping wollopping Kettle, with ten thousand tons of metal sink as the Titans settle, turtle-turned, or wrenched and rent,

To my rocks and my ooze. I seem little like to lose by the "Progress" some abuse, and the many crack up.

Ah! NEPTUNE, sour old lad, DAVY JONES may well look glad at the modern Iron-clad, and thank ARMSTRONG and KRUPP!

Science and Salvage? Fudge! If I am any judge, my sea-depths and salt sludge will not lose by them.

NEP calls me callous mocker, but, according to my Cocker, I may laugh, with a full Locker, whilst the fools condemn.

Think of daring the blue brine with a chart of the Eighty-Nine, and "a regular gold-mine" in one huge black hulk!

Whilst the lubbers stick to that, I shall flourish and grow fat like a shark or an ocean-rat, though old NEP may sulk.

Demon-Sexton of the Deep! Ha! ha! Ho! ho! I keep my old office. Wives may weep, and the taxpayers moan;

Let the grumblers make appeal to King Science! Lords of Steel, Iron Chieftains, do ye feel when your victims groan?

DAVY JONES is well content with that tribute ye have sent, with the millions ye have spent just to glut his gorge;

He had seldom such a fill in the days of wood—and skill—constant sea-fights, or the spill of the *Royal George*.

Good old false last-century Chart! Though the conning may be smart, and the steersman play his part, Palinurus-like,

Whilst they trust to your vain vellum, which is almost sure to sell 'em, even DAVY JONES can tell 'em, they may sink or strike.

Hooray, King Death, hooray! Who says we've had our day! Pass the rum and let's be gay. Not that "dead man's chest."

ROBERT LOUIS grimly sings, like my "Locker Chorus" rings—mingling weirdly wedded things—grisly doom and jest!

On an Irish Landlord.

"Love thou thy Land!" So sang the Laureate.

Were that sole Landlord duty, you'd fulfil it!

But land makes not a Land, nor soil a State. Loving your land, how sullenly you hate—The People—who've to till it!

Of the earth, earthy is that love of soil Which for wide-acred wealth will sap and spoil

The souls and sinews of the thralls of Toil. Churl! Bear a human heart, a liberal hand! Then thou may'st say that thou dost "love thy Land."

WHEN a Stag has once been uncartered, and has been given so many minutes law to get away, the Huntsman may correctly allude to him as "The Deer Departed."



“DAVY JONES'S LOCKER.”

DAVY JONES. “AHA! SO LONG AS THEY STICK TO THEM OLD CHARTS, NO FEAR O' MY LOCKER
BEIN' EMPTY!!”



RECONCILIATION.

(Scene from that new Screaming Farce "The Political Box and Cox.")

["Mr. GLADSTONE (says the *Daily Chronicle*) has effected a formal reconciliation with the Member for Northampton. He visited Mr. and Mrs. LABOUCHERE, took tea with them, and had a long and very cordial interview. So far, indeed, as Mr. LABOUCHERE ever had any personal feeling in reference to his exclusion from the Ministry, it may be regarded as dead."]



Box. Although we are not destined to occupy the same—ahem!—Cabinet Council Chamber—at present, I don't see any necessity for our cutting each other's political throat, Sir.

Cox. Not at all. It's an operation that I should decidedly object to.

Box. And, after all, I've no violent animosity against you, Sir.

Cox. Nor have I any rooted antipathy to you, Sir.

Box. Besides, it was all—ahem!—Mrs.—ahem's fault, Sir!

Cox (embarrassed). Well—ahem!—my—er—loyalty—as a man of honour—to—er—that lady, Sir, forbids, Sir, my saying, or—er—permitting to be said—

[Gradually approaching chairs.]

Box. Ah, exactly, I quite understand that. The truth is—

Cox (quickly). A most excellent thing, in its way. I always see it.

Box. Very well, Sir!

Cox. Very well, Sir!

Box. Take a little jam, Sir!

Cox. Thank you, Sir!

[Taking a spoonful. Pause.]

Box. Do you sing, Sir?

Cox (modestly). I have, in days gone by, done a little Negro Minstrelsy.

Box. Then give us a breakdown. (Pause.) Well, well, perhaps the suggestion's a little inopportune. What is your opinion of smoking, Sir?

[Produces cigarette.]

Cox (tartly). I think it is a pestilent practice, Sir!

Box (puffing). So do some other singular people, Sir. To be sure, they may not so much object to it if the pipes are not loaded.

Cox. No—I daresay that does make some difference.

Box. And yet, Sir, on the other hand, doesn't it strike you, as rather a waste of time, for people to keep puffing away at pipes (or Programmes) with nothing in 'em?

Cox (dryly). No, Sir—not more than any other harmless recreation—such, for instance, as posing as a Party leader, without any Party.

Box (aside). Some of his own Party may be found a bit shaky. Next time I invite him, it may be to tea—and turn-out!

Cox (aside). Let him put that in his pipe (or cigarette) and smoke it!

Box (aloud). Well, well, now we so thoroughly understand each other, what—even Programmes—shall part us?

Cox. Who—even—ahem! a certain Party, shall tear us asunder?

Box. Cox!

Cox. Box!

[About to embrace. Box stops, seizes Cox's hand, and looks eagerly in his face.]

Box. You'll excuse the apparent insanity of the remark, but the more I gaze on your features, the more I'm convinced that you'd never be such a suicidal idiot as to—seek another Chamber?

Cox (winking). Walker!

Box. Ah—tell me—in merey tell me—have you such a thing as the "Strawberry Leaves" in your eye?

Cox. No!

Box. Then we are brothers!

[They rush into each other's arms.]

Cox. Of course, we stop where we are?

Box. Of course!

Cox. For between you and me, I'm rather partial to the House.

Box. So am I—I feel quite at home in it.

Cox. Everything so clean and comfortable!

Box. And I'm sure its Mistress, Mrs.—ahem!—from what little I've seen of her, is very anxious to do her best.

Cox. So she is—and I vote, Box, that we stand by her!

Box. Agreed! (winks). There's my hand upon it—join but yours—agree that the House is big enough to hold us both, then Box—

Cox. And Cox—

Both. Are satisfied!

[Curtain.]

FACT, OR FUNK?

SIR.—Will you permit me to protest against the shocking insecurity of life and property in London? What are the Police doing? Only yesterday I was walking, in the middle of the day, in a rather quiet road in this suburb, when a highway robber, disguised as an ordinary beggar, asked me for a copper! His look was most forbidding, and he put his hand under his coat in a way that convinced me he was about to draw a revolver! I at once gave him my purse, with half-a-crown in it, which seemed to pacify him, and I am convinced that I owe my life to my presence of mind. The shock, however, has quite prostrated me, and my medical adviser has already paid me three visits, on the strength of it, and says I need "careful watching for some time." He has very kindly put off a holiday, in order to watch me, which is sufficient to prove what a diabolical outrage I have been the victim of!

Yours, indignantly,

Cosynook, Sydenham. TABITHA GRUNDY.

DEAR MR. PUNCH.—We are coming to a really awful state of things in the Strand! A friend of mine (who does not wish his name mentioned) assures me that he was proceeding from the Gaiety Restaurant, where he had been lunching, towards Charing Cross, when he was "attacked by VERTIGO" in broad day-light! Comment is needless. If dangerous foreign bandits like this VERTIGO—who from his name must be an Italian—are permitted to plunder innocent pedestrians with impunity, the sooner we abolish our Police Force and save the expense, the better.

No ALARMIST.

DEAR EDITOR.—I write you a line to say I've just been 'sulted—grossly 'sulted—on Thames' Bankmen'. Walkin' 'long—quite shober—sud'ly 'costed by man dressed like 'pleeceman. Said "lot bad krakters about"—took hold of my arm—wanted see me into cab. I saw through him at once. It was a plot! Wanted steal vabblewatch—for-shately lef' watch home. Angry at not findin' watch—bundled me into cab anyhow—feel 'fects still. Whaah Scotland Yard 'bout? Are spekkbull citizens to be 'sulted by pleece—by me'dress-li'pleece, I mean? It's all true 'bout Lunn' bein' most unsafe. Norra word of 'xagg'ration! Crye 'xperito. Thaah Latin!—Shoos I'm spekkbull. No more now! He's aho. Yours, RUM PUNCH.

Sir Gerald Portal.

Of Afrio's districts C. and E.,

'Tis clear to any mortal,

We've but to keep our Afric key,

And enter by OUR PORTAL.

THE following mysterious advertisement is out from the *Grantham Journal* :—

WANTED, to Purchase, a HALF-LEGGED Horse, five years old, suitable for Building work, about 16 hands.—Address, &c.

Is the horse to have two legs? Not on all fours with nature? And the sixteen hands? Compensation for want of legs? Give it up!

THE NEXT ELECTION PIC-NIC.

(By Our Own Prophetic Reporter.)

A FEW days since a "Grand Intellectual Fête" was given by the Flower League in advancement of the Patriotic Cause, in the grounds of the Duke of DITCHWATER. The Railway Companies afforded unusual facilities for securing a large gathering, and there was much enthusiasm amongst those who were present. To meet the requirements of decisions arrived at during the trial of recent Election Petitions, it was arranged that some one competent to undertake the task should introduce and explain the various distractions afforded for the entertainment of the very numerous company. Mr. A. BRIEFLESS, JUNIOR, Barrister, of London, kindly consented to act as lecturer, his professional engagements fortunately allowing him leisure to assume such a responsibility.

The Lecturer said that he was delighted to see so large a gathering. (Cheers.) They quite reminded him of the clients who thronged his passage on the first day of Term, waiting for his chamber doors to open. (Laughter.) There was nothing in the remark he had just made to provoke merriment. He wished it to be clearly understood that he appealed to their reason. (Cheers.) It had been objected that some of the entertainments given at what had been called political pic-nics had nothing to do with the reasoning faculties of the spectators. This he emphatically denied. (Applause.) Without wasting further of their time—"No, no!" "Go on!"—he would come to his first illustration—the Bounding Brothers of Bohemia. (Great cheering.) It was advisable that the bodies as well as the minds of children educated by the School-Boards should receive attention. Their bodies should be brought to as near perfection as possible; every muscle should be brought into play. To explain his meaning, he called upon the Bounding Brothers of Bohemia to illustrate the poetry of motion.

Upon this, five gentlemen in tight (understood to be the athletic kindred to whom the Lecturer had referred) performed a series of feats of strength, which included standing on one another's heads, jumping through hoops, and turning quadruple somersaults.

After their performances were over Mr. BRIEFLESS resumed. The Lecturer said: He next wished to appeal to their reason—to challenge, so to speak, their senses on the power of foreign opinion. It was asserted that an Englishman cared only for his native land and the Press appertaining thereto. Now he (the Lecturer) had the greatest respect for the English Press—(cheers)—still he found that some of our foreign contemporaries were nearly as good. ("Hear, hear!") He wished to introduce the Signora MANTILLA from Spain—(applause)—who had consented to sing a political song in Spanish, emphasizing her opinions by a dance after each verse. (Great cheering.) The Signora MANTILLA then gave a demonstration, which was much appreciated.

The Lecturer resumed. He said he had not insulted their intelli-

gence by asking them if they understood Spanish. Of course, they did. (Loud laughter.) He was quite sure that the Signora's third verse and accompanying dance must have convinced everyone of the advantages of Fair Trade. (Laughter.) He saw no reason for merriment. (Renewed laughter.) He had now come to that important subject Bi-metallism. (Cheers.) They had been told that whereas speech was silver, silence was golden. ("Hear, hear!") To show the advantage of silver (represented by speech), the Blue-eyed Nigger would give a native song accompanied on his own banjo. (Loud applause.)

The Blue-eyed Nigger then favoured the company with one of his characteristic ditties.



MILITARY EDUCATION.

General. "MR. DE BRIDDOON, WHAT IS THE GENERAL USE OF CAVALEY IN MODERN WARFARE?"

Mr. de Bridoon. "WELL, I SUPPOSE TO GIVE TONE TO WHAT WOULD OTHERWISE BE A MERE VULGAR BRAWL!"

The Lecturer said he had now to thank his audience for their kind attention, and to inform them that the display of fireworks with set-pieces containing political sentiments appealing to their reason, would take place immediately.

Shortly afterwards the company separated, greatly pleased with the rational entertainment they had been invited to enjoy.

ADAPTED FROM THE FRENCH.

(Being a Parisian Parliamentary Procedure as "She Might be Spoke in England.")

SCENE — The House of Commons at question-time. Ministers in attendance, excited Members regarding them with derision.

First Member. I claim the word, Mr. SPEAKER. I would ask Esquire HARCOURT, does he propose to make his Budget popular? ["Very well! very well!" from the Conservatives.]

Esquire HARCOURT. I tell the Hon. Gentleman that by such a question he insults the world! (Cheers.) Nay, he insults England! [Loud applause, in which all join.]

First Mem. (after a pause). Still, you have not answered my question. Is your Budget to be popular? [Murmure.]

Esquire Har. (with spirit). I consider such a question twice repeated an infamy!

[Enthusiastic cheering.] Second Mem. Then it is you who are infamous!

[Uproar.] The Speaker. Gentlemen, Ministers, do not

force me to put on my hat—do not cause me to suspend the sitting.

First Mem. Surely a civil question deserves a civil answer?

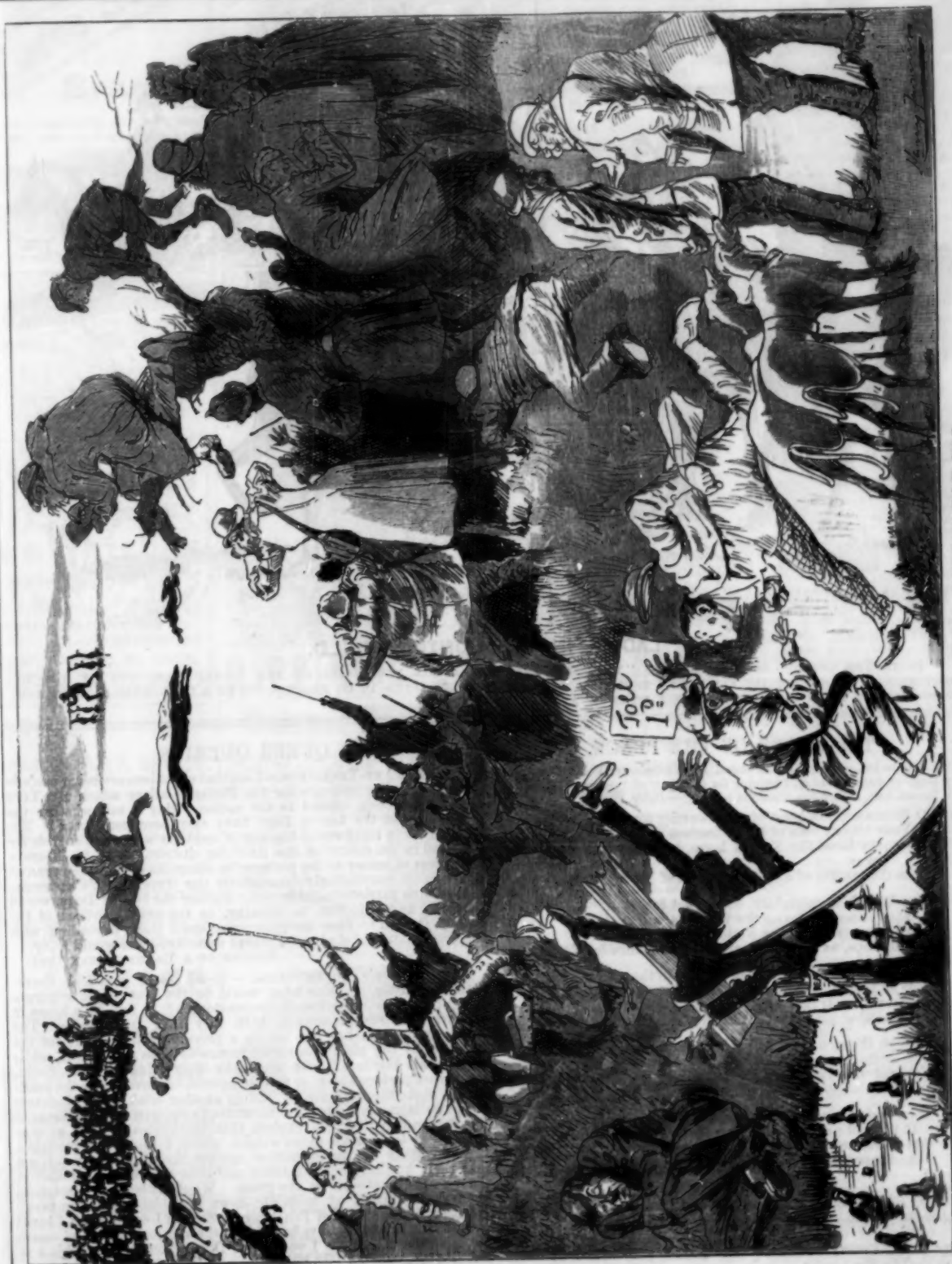
Esquire HARCOURT. Not in a nation that has bled on the field of battle. [Roars of applause.]

First Mem. (after a pause). And yet what I required to know was reasonable. I wished to know whether Esquire HARCOURT proposed to name a popular Budget?

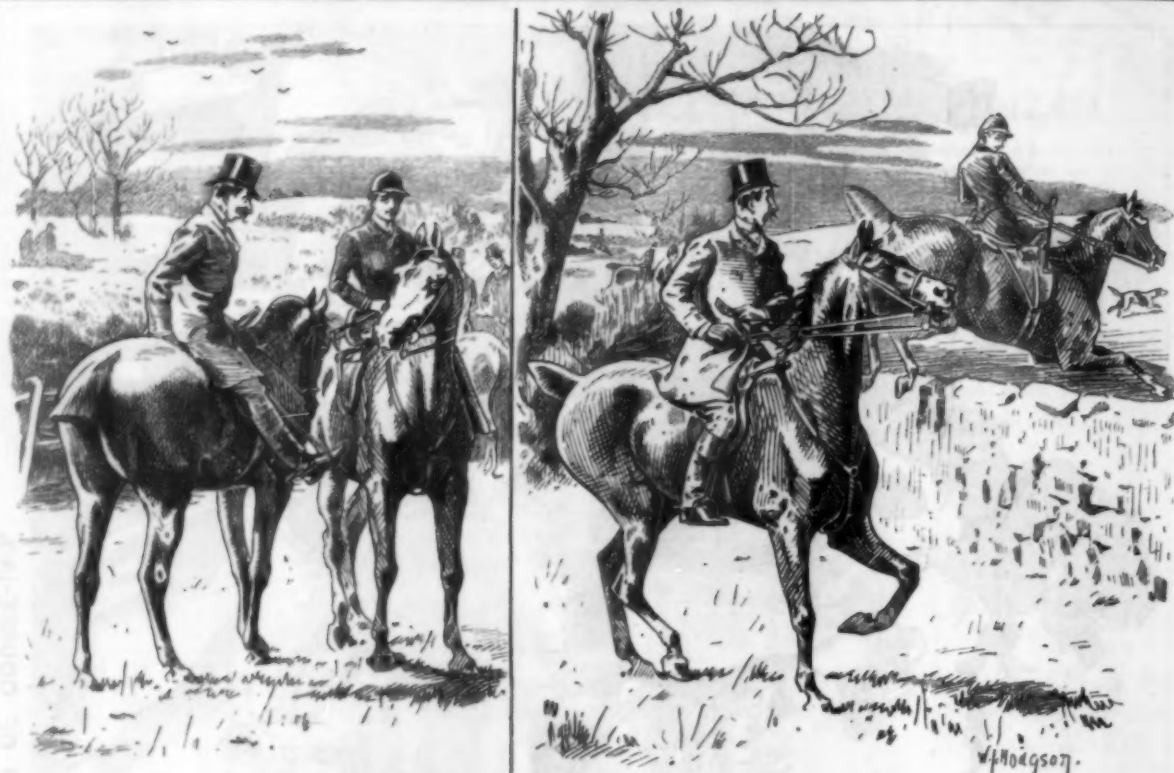
Esquire HARCOURT. He repeats the calumny! [Uproar.]

First Mem. (after a pause). But is there no reply? I would ask Sir GLADSTONE—is there no reply?

Sir Gladstone (springing to his feet). It is for the honour of England! (Immense enthusiasm.) And now, Sir, you are answered! [Roars of applause. Scene closes in upon Ministers receiving the hand-shakes of supporters and opponents.]



SPORT AS A MATTER OF COURSE-ING.



LADIES IN THE HUNTING FIELD.

IT IS THE OPINION OF MR. PHUNKIE "THAT THE FAIR SEX IS ALL VERY WELL AT THE COVERT SIDE, AND HE HAS NO OBJECTION TO A LITTLE QUIET FLIRTATION THERE; BUT IF A MAN IS EXPECTED TO GO HANGING ROUND A GIRL WHEN HOUNDS ARE RUNNING, THE THING IS APT TO BECOME A DOOCH OF A NUISANCE!"

TAKE CARE OF THE PENCE.

["A deputation of Seamstresses stated at Westminster Police Court, that they make soldiers' clothing, receiving for each pair of trousers 8½d., and for each fannel-belt, rather less than one penny."—*Daily Paper.*]

O ENGLAND, you boast of your warrior sons,
Your history tells of them, fearless in strife,
How they faced the French horse, how they charged Russian
guns.

So thoughtful of duty, so careless of life!

You honour them rightly, but do not forget
That economy pleases the voters as well;
Each penny reduces the National Debt;
Old Ships, as you know, are the best things to sell.

You could not escape paying pounds to the men
Who fought, wearing soles of brown paper, supplied
In your wise, frugal way. Follow precedent then!
Remember pence saved, not your children who died!

Though the men must be paid, such expense need not vex
A skilful economist. This can be met.
You can always grind pence from the poor, weaker sex;
If the clothes are ill-made, think what bargains you get!

Then lavish your honours, your wealth, on the brave,
If you did not, perhaps, scarce a man would enlist;
But forget not the gain of each penny you save,
And starve these poor Women—they cannot resist.

PEARS' Christmas Number—what it ought to be:—A new edition of "His Soap's Fables."

THE REAL ENEMY TO "THE BIG LOAF" (ACCORDING TO JOHN BURNS).—The Big Loafer.

QUEER QUERIES.

NATIONAL ART-TREASURES.—I see that objections are being made to Millbank as a suitable site for the Picture Gallery which Mr. TATE has so generously offered to the nation. May I ask whether the advantages of the Isle of Dogs have ever been considered? The position being right out of the way of anybody who cares a rush for Art, and in the centre of the river-fog district, so as to ensure a maximum of injury to the pictures by damp, its offer to the generous donor would convincingly demonstrate our Government's appreciation of such patriotic munificence. Failing the Isle of Dogs, would there be any objection to Barking, in the neighbourhood of the Sewage Outfall? They are quite accustomed there to dealing with the precipitation of sludge. Perhaps some Art-lover would reply.

CITIZEN OF A RATHER MEAN CITY.

HOUSEHOLDERS' DIFFICULTIES.—Could some practical Correspondent advise us as to what would be the best course to pursue under the following awkward circumstances? I live in a house in a newly-constructed terrace, with very thin party-walls. The tenant on one side has just set up a private establishment for the reception of the most thoroughly incurable class of maniacs, while on the other side is a family who make their living by piano, violin, and cornet performances, at private houses. I have asked the landlord to abate the nuisance by adding another brick to the thickness of the walls on each side; but he writes to me, giving his address at the Bankruptcy Court, to explain that the houses are not so constructed as to bear the extra weight, which I think very probable. I would apply for an injunction against the Maniacs, were it not that their howlings are sometimes useful in drowning the sound of the constant practising on the piano. Would it be wise to retaliate by dropping bricks at midnight down my neighbours' chimneys? What is the least term of Penal Servitude that I could get if I hired some of the Unemployed to break into the musical house and smash up the instruments? If I went as a Deputation on the subject to Mr. ASQUITH, should I be likely to be cordially received?

TORTURED TENANT.

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